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ABSTRACT

This short work lists 12 needs and recommendations for the future of school counseling. The list is as follows: (1) Need for a developmental curriculum of counseling; (2) Need for professional development for experienced counselors; (3) Need for counselors to practice effective program development, management, accountability, research, and evaluation skills; (4) Need for administrators to understand the counselor's role today and in the future; (5) Need for counselors to understand and respond to the impact of multiculturalism; (6) Need for counselors to respond to the impact of societal issues on students, their families, and the community; (7) Need for counselors to know family systems and intervention strategies; (8) Need for referral networks for students with complex needs; (9) Need for supervisors of school counselors; (10) There is a shortage of competent school counselors; (11) Need for counselor educators with experience in school counseling; and (12) Need for state level leadership to assume responsibility for supporting and upgrading school counseling programs in each state. (Contains 37 references.) (RJM)

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VISION AND VOCATION IN SCHOOL COUNSELING

Presentation at the 1992 ACES Convention

"Valuing Pluralism: Community Building for the 21st Century"

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Our purpose is to examine school counseling today and project what needs to be done for a desired vision and vocation for school counseling. We will do this by identifying some basic premises relating to school counseling. Next we will identify 12 major needs for the future of school counseling. Following each need, there will be a recommendation for future action. Let us begin.

A premise upon which quality school counseling programs are built is that school counseling programs must respond to the needs of the students as identified by the students, school staff, parents, and community.

In addition, school counseling programs need to be outcome-based and address the developmental needs of all students (Van Hesteren & Ivey, 1990). The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has stated that "All schools need an outcome based, planned program of student services which is comprehensive and focuses on the developmental needs of all students." (ASCA Counselor, p. 7).

In order to be ultimately effective, counselors need to work collaboratively with students, support staff, faculty, administrators, parents, and members of the community. The work of the student services staff is most closely related to the work of the counselors. It then necessarily follows that the entire student services should be working effectively together. In 1990, a position statement, "Pupil Services: Essential to Education", was accepted by the American Counseling Association, the American School Counselor Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the National Association of Social Workers. This collaborative statement indicated that the team approach is based on the following six concepts:

1. Pupil services programs should be developed from identified needs of students, parents, staff, and administrators.

2. All pupil services are related and must be coordinated for optimum effectiveness.

3. Pupil services demand developmental, preventive and remedial emphases, thus requiring the contributions of skilled professionals.

4. Pupil services facilitate effective linkages between the school community and external community resources.

5. Program evaluation is critical to pupil services teamwork.

6. The teamwork required for achievement of pupil service objectives mandates trust, open communication, mutual respect, ongoing collaboration and effective coordination.

Further the position statement indicated, "We believe that this team approach for pupil services can establish a national precedent for state and local initiatives. (p. 2)

Thus, we have three major premises that underlie the design and delivery of school counseling programs: (1) School counseling programs are based on the identified needs of students; (2) School counseling programs are planned, comprehensive, outcome-based programs that focus on the developmental needs of all students; and (3) School counseling programs are delivered by counselors in collaboration with other student service professionals and utilize students, teachers, administrators, and community members as resources. With these fundamental premises, we can now

identify the needs of school counseling programs and offer recommendations to elicit quality programming for the future of school counseling.

Needs and Recommendations for the Future of School Counseling

A review of the literature was done on the future of school counseling. (See references.) Based on this review and my own experiences, a number of needs followed by recommendations are presented. These can serve as a stimulus for discussion and the identification of other needs and recommendations.

1. The Need for a Developmental Curriculum of Counseling. In order for there to be planned, comprehensive, outcome-based programs with a focus on the identified developmental needs of all students, school counselors must be skilled to design and implement such programs. The totality of such programming, Pre-K through 12, is the curriculum of counseling (Olson & Perrone, 1991), (Tollerud & Nejedlo, In press). When administrators and teachers hear that the developmental curriculum of counseling teaches students to learn life skills which will enable them to meet life themes and life transitions, they can understand not only the need for such a curriculum, but also the need for professional counselors to deliver the curriculum of counseling.

Recommendation. Counselor educators should teach future school counselors how to design and implement the developmental curriculum of counseling. In addition, counselors in the school should take part in professional development workshops designed to teach the skills of designing and implementing the developmental curriculum of counseling.

2. Need for Professional Development for Experienced Counselors. Because there are many school counselors who received their master's degrees in the late 50's, 60's, and 70's and because significant strides have been made in counselor preparation since then, professional development workshops are needed to update experienced counselors. Specifically, newer approaches and skills in individual and group counseling have emerged.

Recommendation. Surveys to determine counselors' professional development needs could be undertaken. Professional development workshops and/or credit courses could then be offered in the designated areas of need, e.g., brief counseling (Littrell, et al., 1992), individual and group counseling, practical techniques for counseling children/adolescents, and designing and implementing a developmental curriculum of counseling.

3. Need for Counselors to Practice Effective Program Development, Management, Accountability, Research, and Evaluation Skills. Many school counseling programs in the past have suffered from a clearly articulated program with identified student outcomes. Counselors typically were not taught a systems approach to management, and in too many instances counselors did not use their research and evaluation skills. In the absence of these skills and practices counselors, in too many cases counselors were told what to do by administrators who were not knowledgeable about a counseling program and the role of a counselor.

Recommendation. Pre-service and in-service programs need to teach the skills and desired practices which will ensure effective program development, management, accountability, research, and evaluation.

4. Need for Administrators to Understand the Counselor's Role Today and in the Future. Because it seems to be the rare school administrator who understands the work of the counselor, counselors are often asked to do clerical tasks like attendance checks and other paperwork. Too often, administrators view counselors as those who should do inappropriate "other tasks as assigned." Perhaps if they really understood what counselors are supposed to do, they would provide the needed support.

Recommendation. Counselor educators familiar with the work of school counselors could help school counselors by clearly articulating the curriculum of counseling and the role of the counselor to school administrators in their offices, at their conferences, and in educational administration classes.

5. Need for Counselors to Understand and Respond to the Impact of Multiculturalism. Counselors now and in the future need to be aware of all aspects of multiculturalism including ethnicity, ageism, gender issues, sexual orientation, religion, and all the "isms" reflected in a pluralistic global society. With increasing concerns of these populations, counselors must be able to counsel and/or make referrals in the students' best interests. (Carey, Reinat, & Fontes, 1990), (Colbert, 1991), (Das & Bright, 1988), (Griggs & Dunn, 1990), (Sher & Good, 1990).

Recommendation. The subject matter of multiculturalism must be integrated into the master's and doctoral counselor preparation programs. In-service programs need to

be provided for counselors in the schools to enable them to work effectively with all aspects of multiculturalism. Counselors need to program for increasing scholastic achievement, reducing student dropout rates, and promoting equal opportunity.

6. Need for Counselors to Respond to the Impact of Societal Issues on Students, Their Families, and the Community. Crabbs (1989) identified 12 societal issues affecting the counselors' role. They are: violence, alcohol and other substance abuse, intolerance, gang activity, physical and sexual abuse, sex education, computer technology, changing values, health practices, poverty, changing family structure, and childhood fears. These are serious societal issues that are impacting the lives of our nation's youth and adults.

Recommendation. Both pre- and in-service programming needs to address the implications of those changing societal issues for remedial, developmental, and preventive activities in the curriculum of counseling.

7. Need for Counselors to Know Family Systems and Intervention Strategies. With increasing single and blended families, counselors need to understand the principles of family systems theory and family counseling intervention strategies, become aware of and use family service agencies, and become familiar with research on families (Wilcoxon & Comas 1987).

Recommendation. Counselors need training in the basics of family counseling, not so much that they practice family counseling, but rather that they recognize when appropriate referral is needed.

8. Need for referral networks for students with complex needs. Because of the increasing numbers of students with complex problems, counselors will be faced with the

need to refer students to professionals outside the school. There is not and will not be enough time for counselors to counsel all of these students, and further, the counseling needs may require skills of psychologists, psychiatrists, and family therapists.

Recommendation. It is suggested that counselors work together to establish referral networks to meet the needs of student and/or family referrals.

9. Need for Supervisors of School Counselors. In my opinion, the major reason why many school counseling programs are not as strong as desired and why many counselors are criticized by administrators is that in most cases counselors are not supervised by qualified counselor supervisors; they are supervised by assistant principals or principals who are not professional counselors.

Recommendation. All school counselors need to be supervised by a professional counselor. It may be that counselors will need to report to an assistant principal or principal; however, a qualified professional counselor with experience and/or coursework in supervision needs to be appointed as the counselors' supervisor.

10. There is a shortage of competent school counselors. Because approximately half of today's school counselor's are nearing retirement, we will be faced with a shortage of competent school counselors. Today's and tomorrow's school counselors need to have current competencies. While there are many teachers with master's degrees in counseling, it is most likely that their preparation is out-dated. The professional accreditation standard is now a 48-semester-hour master's program.

Recommendation. Promising future school counselors should be recruited into quality counselor preparation programs in order that the available supply of competent school counselors will satisfy the demand for available positions.

11. Need for Counselor Educators with Experience in School Counseling. There is a shortage of counselor educators who have had experience as a school counselor. There are school counselors who earn doctoral degrees; however, most of them are at a salary level that makes it financially unrealistic for them to accept a beginning salary as an assistant professor.

Recommendation. Counselor educators are encouraged to identify promising master's level students and encourage them to obtain 3-4 years of school counseling experience and then return to graduate school to earn the doctoral degree in counselor education.

12. Need for State Level Leadership to Assume Responsibility for Supporting and Up-grading School Counseling Programs in each State. Several states have witnessed the decreasing of state department of education funding for the support of counselors and counseling programs. This process, in some states, has resulted in a general lack of state leadership for counseling. In the past, state departments were responsible for building and maintaining quality school counseling pr[illegible]rams.

Recommendation. State branches of the American Counseling Association (ACA) and state divisions of the American School Counselors Association should assume strong leadership in promoting and supporting quality school counseling programs. ACA and ASCA should continue to lend national support for strengthening school counseling in the nation's schools.

Examples of Excellence

There are numerous examples of noteworthy efforts that offer real promise to the movement of school counseling to a standard of excellence. Selected examples will serve to highlight the fact that professionals in school counseling are working toward a standard of excellence.

America 2000: An Education Strategy--Role of School Counselors in Achieving the National Education Goals (Schwallie-Giddis & Perry 1991) is an example of ACA and ASCA providing national leadership. Other examples of professional association efforts are the publications School Counseling: A Profession at Risk (AACA School Counseling Task Force, 1988), School Counseling: Strategies for Enhancement (Cecil, Deck & Comas, 1989), and Counseling Paints a Bright Picture: Student Competencies--A Guide for School Counselors (ASCA 1990).

In providing models for quality school counseling programs, the New Hampshire Model (Carr & Hayslip, 1989) offers four components: (1) a guidance curriculum; (2) individualized planning; (3) responsive counseling, consultation, and referral; and (4) program management and systems support. Some other program models are the

Missouri Model, the Wisconsin Model and the Student Development Model (Nejedlo & Tollerud, 1991).

A model for in-service professional development that has excellent promise is the Oakland Counselor Academy. The Oakland (Michigan) Counselor Academy is a professional development program for counselors who are selected and then meet once a month from 8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from September through April (Splete & Grisdale, 1992). An evaluation of the program (Waidley and Pappas, 1992) indicated that the in-service program had a positive effect on counselors 2, 3, and 4 years after the experience. They stimulated and excited the professional development of counselors and they brought about positive change in the schools.

Two final examples relate to the hallmarks of attaining professional stature, certification and accreditation. National school counselor certification has been established by NBCC (Staff, 1990). Its requirements include the NCC credential, specialized school counseling coursework, professional school counseling experience, and documentation proficiency in the practice of school counseling. Adding this credential will promote public awareness and other school professionals' awareness of quality school counseling. Regarding accreditation, we have seen significant growth in the number of university programs being accredited by CACREP. A count of the number of accredited school counseling programs revealed that, as of September 1, 1982, at the onset of accreditation, 20 colleges and universities were accredited; as of December, 1987, 43 were accredited; and as of July, 1992, a total of 63 were accredited. Increasing

certifications and accreditations will promote public awareness and other school professionals' awareness of quality school counseling.

Conclusion

School Counseling needs professional counselors who are competent and current in their knowledge and skills. School counselors need to know how to counsel individuals and groups; they need to know how to design and implement the curriculum of counseling; they need to be able to work effectively in a systematic, well managed, comprehensive developmental program; and they need to be committed to updating their knowledge and skills by participating in professional development programs. This is the vision of school counseling for the future. And if this vision becomes reality, the vocation of school counseling will be a rewarding one for the professional school counselors in tomorrow's pluralistic society.

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